

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE B-14

NEW YORK TIMES
15 OCTOBER 1981



Associated Press

Marian W. Zacharski

POLE GOES TO TRIAL ON COAST AS A SPY

Ex-Engineer at Hughes Pleads
Guilty and Is Expected to
Be Key State Witness

By JUDITH CUMMINGS

Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 14—A spy trial that underscores the growing problem of espionage in California's military technology industry opened in Federal court here this week.

The case, focused on the sale of secret information important to national security, was left with only one defendant after a guilty plea was entered by William Holden Bell, a former projects engineer with Hughes Aircraft. The remaining defendant is suspected of being a Polish spy.

As described by American officials, the case is rich with the elements of a spy novel: A 61-year-old engineer is strained by the effort of providing the good life for his new family in a seaside condominium. He is befriended by a compatible young neighbor who eventually offers cash and gold in exchange for documents on some of Hughes Aircraft's latest weapons and radar systems.

Mr. Bell, according to an affidavit filed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was paid \$110,000, mostly in \$100 bills and gold coins, for the information. He and the suspected spy were arrested, with Mr. Bell's help, in June.

Marian W. Zacharski, the suspected spy, could get life imprisonment if convicted. He is accused of two counts of conspiring to gather and deliver military information to the Polish Government and, intelligence officials assume, the Soviet Union.

Mr. Zacharski, a Polish citizen, was following the outline for a version of the American success story until he was arrested.

At the age of 29, he had just been named head of the Polish American Machinery Corporation, 90 percent owned by the Polish Government. He was to move to the company's headquarters in Illinois in two weeks when the authorities closed in.

Jury selection began this week in Federal District Court before Judge David V. Kenyon. The Assistant United States Attorney prosecuting the case, Robert S. Brewer Jr., has predicted a four-week trial. Mr. Bell is expected to be the prosecution's key witness.

He Is Denied Bail

Mr. Zacharski was denied bail after the authorities said he might try to leave the country or seek consular refuge. His lawyer, Edward Stadum of San Francisco, complained that Mr. Zacharski had been held in maximum security since the arrest.

Most of the attention here, however, has been focused on Mr. Bell, one of thousands of workers employed here by strategic aerospace and electronics companies.

The interest is generated because Mr. Bell's situation, before his involvement with Mr. Zacharski, seemed so unremarkable.

Other residents of the condominium at Playa del Rey recalled Mr. Bell and Mr. Zacharski as being pleasant family men, tennis partners who could be observed keeping watch over the children in the pool. Mr. Bell, recently remarried to a woman with a 9-year-old child, had worked at Hughes for 29 years, rising to a radar project manager with a "secret" clearance. According to the F.B.I., as Mr. Bell's friendship with Mr. Zacharski grew, Mr. Bell confided that he was worried about debts for the apartment and a new car. The younger man expressed an interest in Hughes documents, the affidavit says, and offered a contract: \$3,000 a month in United States currency plus a lump sum of \$90,000 a year.

The F.B.I. said that early in 1979 it received information that secret Hughes documents had been turned over to Polish agents. Hughes was developing projects it hoped to sell to the United States Government. The company helped and the trail led to Mr. Bell. He was dismissed by Hughes and after he was confronted, he agreed to cooperate in the investigation.

In the affidavit, the F.B.I. said that Mr. Bell admitted having photographed documents with a special camera and having delivered them to Polish agents in four trips to Austria and Switzerland in 1979 and 1980.

He said he had been given a code phrase for identifying contacts: "Aren't you a friend of Marian?"

In June, equipped with a voice recording device, Mr. Bell visited Mr. Zacharski at his apartment, the affidavit said. They discussed the American's progress in photographing a promised project and a new target was described.

In his guilty plea, Mr. Bell said he gave Polish agents a copy of a document called "Dual Purpose Weapon System Study Effort Final Report," a 1979 project stamped "secret."

He faces a maximum of 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.